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# ITALY IN ARMS AND OTHER POEMS

BY

CLINTON SCOLLARD



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# ITALY IN ARMS

BOOKS BY  
MR. CLINTON SCOLLARD

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BY  
CLINTON SCOLLARD



NEW YORK  
GOMME & MARSHALL  
1915

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JAN 1915

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No. 1.

*Italia, you hold for me  
The glamour of antiquity;  
Beauty inviolate as the sea.*

*Yours are the meshes of a spell  
Fragile and yet infrangible;  
Subtle as music from a shell.*

*Around you hangs the aureole  
Of art, and for my sense and soul  
You are forevermore the goal!*



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## ITALY IN ARMS

Of all my dreams by night and day,  
One dream will evermore return,  
The dream of Italy in May;  
The sky a brimming azure urn  
Where lights of amber brood and burn;  
The doves about San Marco's square,  
The swimming Campanile tower,  
The giants, hammering out the hour,  
The palaces, the bright lagoons,  
The gondolas gliding here and there  
Upon the tide that sways and swoons.

The domes of San Antonio,  
Where Padua 'mid her mulberry trees  
Reclines; Adige's crescent flow  
Beneath Verona's balconies;  
Rich Florence of the Medicis;  
Siena's stairlike streets that climb  
From hill to hill; Assisi well  
Remembering the holy spell  
Of rapt Saint Francis; with her crown  
Of battlements, embossed by time,  
Stern old Perugia looking down.

Then, mother of great empires. Rome,  
    City of the majestic past,  
That o'er far leagues of alien foam  
    The shadow of her eagles cast,  
    Imperious still; impending, vast,  
The Colosseum's curving line;  
    Pillar and arch and colonnade;  
    Saint Peter's consecrated shade,  
    And Hadrian's tomb where Tiber strays;  
The ruins on the Palatine  
    With all their memories of dead days.

And Naples, with her sapphire arc  
    Of bay, her perfect sweep of shore;  
Above her, like a demon stark,  
    The dark fire mountain evermore  
    Looming portentous, as of yore;  
Fair Capri with her cliffs and caves;  
    Salerno drowsing 'mid her vines  
    And olives, and the shattered shrines  
    Of Pæstum where the gray ghosts tread,  
And where the wilding rose still waves  
    As when by Greek girls garlanded.

But hark! What sound the ear dismayed,  
    Mine Italy, mine Italy?  
Thou that wert wrapt in peace, the haze  
    Of loveliness spread over thee!

Yet since the grapple needs must be,  
I who have wandered in the night  
With Dante, Petrarch's Laura known,  
Seen Vallombrosa's groves breeze blown,  
Met Angelo and Raphael,  
Against iconoclastic might  
In this grim hour must wish thee well!

## BELLA GARDA

Over Riva La Rochetta rises with its craggy crown,  
On the quiet mountain village from its summit sheer looks down,  
Flings the sunlight, flings the moonlight, back from climbing cliffs of brown.

At its base the olives silver, and the fleet barks come and go,  
With their sails of tawny saffron, with their slanted sails of snow,  
Straining in the winds of morning, drooping in the even glow.

All along the blue lake's borders toss the red buoys with the tide,  
Ever shifting, ever changing through the luring hues that hide  
In the bosom of the sapphire, in the turquoise glorified.

Oleanders in the gardens with the bland blush roses vie,  
And the palm trees throw their shadows, and the lizards laze and lie  
In the sun whose golden sceptre rules an arc of stainless sky.

You may hear the boatmen calling, you may  
hear the boatmen sing  
Songs of love and songs of longing as the swal-  
lows wing and wing,  
And the air that breathes about you is the air  
of endless spring.

And that titan, Monte Baldo, with its heights of  
shine and shade,  
Looms beyond the fair lake's bosom, in its maj-  
esty arrayed,  
Crests and bastions, sheer abysses, and the fur-  
rows God has made.

Bella Garda! Bella Garda! Set forevermore  
apart  
In that temple we call beauty, far beyond the  
reach of art,  
While I tread the world of mortals you will hold  
in thrall my heart!

## OUT OF ROME

Out of Rome they march as when  
Scipio led his serried men,  
    While the cry of “Viva! Viva!”  
Rings again and yet again.

They, in dreams of high desire,  
Rousing them to holy ire,  
    On the Capitolian altars  
Have beheld the vestal fire.

Rear and vanguard, first and last,  
They have caught the virile, vast,  
    Emulous centurion ardor  
From some legion of the past.

Win they laurel wreath or rue,  
We must feel that this is true,  
    That the ancient Roman valor  
Thrills through Italy anew!

## A SERENADE

From the mountain's purple shade,  
Down the path the moonbeams made,  
    Came the drifting boatmen singing  
Such a tuneful serenade.

Yearning was the plaintive strain,  
Tender was the low refrain,—  
    *Napoli, oh, Napoli!*  
Love and longing blent with pain.

All the passion of their race  
Burned on each transfigured face;  
    *Napoli, oh, Napoli!*  
Ah, the well-belovèd place!

Then the music faded far  
Till it seemed as though a star  
    (*Napoli, oh, Napoli!*)  
Must be breathing each sweet bar.

Gone!—and yet some distant height  
Caught the cry for lost delight,—  
    *Napoli, oh, Napoli!*—  
Spanning the abyss of night.

And I heard it float in dreams  
Down the tranquil slumber-streams  
(*Napoli, oh, Napoli!*)  
Till the morning showed its beams.

Little training, less of art,  
Just the homesick hunger-smart,—  
*Napoli, oh, Napoli!*—  
Just the outcry of the heart!

## DOLCE FAR NIENTE

The book unconned is cast aside,  
The moment is not meet for prose ;  
I read a rhyme upon the tide  
That just below me ebbs and flows.

The arching sky is sapphire-fair,  
The breeze is like a low refrain ;  
There is a perfume in the air  
Like opening roses after rain.

I mark, along the middle slopes,  
The clustering groves of chestnuts climb,  
Thick as a young girl's budding hopes  
When life is at the pairing-time.

And, scaling height by terraced height,  
Through jagged valleys reaching down,  
I see the javelins of light  
Shatter upon the cliffs of brown.

Or, gliding with the boats that pass,  
In idle errantry I go  
Toward Alpine mountain-peaks that mass  
Their chill white pyramids of snow ;

Or toward that golden south that lies  
'Twixt segments of the shining sea,  
And beckons on with dusk-dark eyes  
Across the plains of Lombardy.

I know the ripe delight of life  
No cloud-encompassed clime can give;  
Here all the radiance is rife  
That elsewhere seems so fugitive.

Then lengthen out, oh, afternoon,  
Nor wane and fade, oh, amber glow,  
But keep the year forever June  
Above dream-fair Bellagio!

## A VENETIAN SUNSET

On the bright bosom of the broad lagoon  
Rocked by the tide we lay,  
And watched the fading of the afternoon.  
In golden calm away.

The water caught the fair faint hues of rose,  
Then flamed to ruby fire  
That touched and lingered on the marble snows  
Of wall and dome and spire.

A graceful bark, with saffron sails outflung,  
Swept toward the ancient mart,  
And poised a moment, like a bird, and hung  
Full in the sunset's heart.

A dull gun boomed, and, as the echo ceased,  
O'er the low dunes afar,  
Lambent and large from out the darkened east,  
Leaped night's first star.

## THERE IS A POOL ON GARDA

There is a pool on Garda,  
'Tis fashioned by the moon  
That climbs above the mountain's crest  
    What time the night birds croon;  
The pool is paved with silver  
    Inwrought with burnished gold,  
And in its deeps a treasure sleeps  
    The goblins stored of old.

There is a pool on Garda,  
    It will elude you still  
Ply you the oar from shore to shore  
    With howe'er strong a will;  
'Twill flee you like a phantom,  
    'Twill lead you on and on;  
A luring light, 'twill fade from sight  
    What time the moon is gone.

There is a pool on Garda,  
    You'll see it in your dreams;  
'Tis shaped of silvery glamour,  
    'Tis fused of golden beams.  
Once you have caught the vision,  
    The fair elusive ray,  
'Twill haunt your brain like some sweet strain  
    Forever and a day!

## SAINT ANTHONY OF PADUA

Saint Anthony, beneath those soaring domes  
That in your memory pious hands upreared,  
I heard to-day the music of the mass,  
And saw the throng in adoration bow,—  
The pleasure-loving folk of Padua.  
The crimson glamour of the altar lights,  
The mellow tinkle of the altar bells,  
The lifting of the consecrated Host,  
And the engirdling hush wherethrough the day,  
From windows high-set in the mighty nave,  
Sifted the softened glory of its gold,—  
All blended in a perfect harmony.  
Here, where in speaking marble your sweet deeds  
Are told so marvellously, your bones repose,  
Though noble actions need no monument.  
About you Padua, rich with the great past,  
Heaped with memorials of the days that were,  
When out of Italy burst the flower of art,  
Pulses and throbs; and yet in the tense press  
Naught seems so vital, so full-filled with soul,  
As you, deep-sepulchred although you are  
Beneath the lift of your stupendous domes!  
So evermore life triumphs over death.

## ASHES FROM A CINERARY URN

(Campo Santo di Salo)

These flakes of ashes that are strewn to-day  
About the crimson roses at our feet,  
Once plucked the rose of life and found it  
sweet,  
Once dreamed the dream of life and found it  
gay.  
Then what more fitting tribute than to lay  
Them round the rose which is the red pulse-  
beat  
Of sentient earth, a harmony complete  
Expressed in bloom, re-bourgeoning alway!

So shall we see with every opening June,  
When crescent hangs the moon at twilight's  
close,  
And pale moths flutter and the hill-winds swoon,  
And down the garden path the glowworm  
glows,  
And every breath we breathe is as a boon,  
A heart re-kindled with the kindling rose!

## WIND OF THE DAWN

O golden wind of the dawn, with your savor of  
the sea,  
Your voice, like a cry in the night, lays hold of  
the heart of me!  
Sings—O the magic things!—sings of Italy!

O golden wind of the dawn, with your savor of  
the sun,  
Your voice, like the sighing of palms, to my  
yearning heart has won!  
Sings—O the magic things that I dream upon!

O golden wind of the dawn, from that olden,  
golden shore,  
May your voice to my heart cry on till the voy-  
age of my life be o'er,  
And then—and then—cry forevermore!

## THE DANCE OF THE OLIVES

When at noontide up Lake Garda (Bella Garda)  
creeps the wind,  
Then each little silvery olive sets its nimble  
leaves to dance;  
How they trip it and they skip it in a measure  
unconfined!  
Hands across in blithe abandon, they retreat  
and they advance.

Every bough on Mount Brione (oh, the branches  
that are there!)  
Every spray where haughty Trenno looks on  
Riva's fruited plain,  
How they amble, how they gambol, how they  
part and how they pair,  
To the lisping and the crisping of the mur-  
murous refrain!

I shall see them clear in visions in a country  
far away,  
If I close my eyes at noontide—all their  
wavering expanse—  
And should frolic breezes whisper I shall smile  
and I shall say:  
“Now the south wind creeps up Garda, and  
the olives are a-dance!”

## A BAMBINO

In Siena, by the stately Duomo,  
(Variant black and white the marble pile!)  
Where, 'mid pomp of popes, an "Ecce Homo"  
Looks adown one dim sequestrate aisle

I beheld a maid with her bambino,  
Round whose tiny head was aureoled  
Such a radiant light as the Trentino  
Sees when morning tips its peaks with gold.

Ah, I thought, had I but Veronese's  
Touch, or flawless Rafaele's skill,  
I might shape a faultless face whose praises  
On the winds around the earth would thrill!

Yet unto the sweet unconscious mother  
It would mean, by doting love beguiled,  
(Mary Mother was but such another!)  
Just the ecstatic wonder of the child.

## THE PONALE ROAD

(Fra Bartolomeo in Riva to Fra Anselmo in  
Padua)

Do you remember the Ponale Road,  
And how its coils along Rochetta's face  
Above the blue of Garda's bosom rise?  
Then how it winds, in serpentine ascent,  
High through the mountain cleft beneath the  
frown

Of overhanging crags and cliffs and peaks,  
Until in long white loops it drops away  
To where Lake Ledro like a jewel lies,  
Its liquid sapphire girt with emerald?  
I know you must recall, although the years  
Seem mist-enshrouded since we twain were boys,  
And in the upland meadows herded goats  
Far above Trenno, and, when autumn's hand  
Tinted the sweeping slopes with russet-gold,  
Gathered the chestnuts in the rustling aisles.  
Such buoyant days!

O'er Monte Baldo still  
The sunrise beacons like the oriflamme  
Of God, and still, beguiled by love, the moon  
Silvers a path for lovers on the lake.

But the Ponale Road.—A week agone,  
In the soft light of failing afternoon,

I wandered forth from Riva. Sarca's plain,  
And Arco's ancient castellated crest,  
Dozed in the sun, but La Rochetta flung  
Wide on the lake its pyramid of shade.  
As I strode up and on, the peasants passed,  
Still faring market-ward with oil and wine,  
Seeking the booths within the little square  
'Neath Santa Maria. There was scarce a sound,  
Save for the treble of a mountain stream  
Amid the rocks, or some faint boatman's call  
Borne from below by echo. I plucked a flower,  
A tiny whorl that blushed as does the rose,  
And bore it with me as I walked along,  
Musing upon its beauty, and how God  
Makes all the world his garden, if but man  
Looks with observant eyes. And so I came  
To where a promontory from the cliff  
Beetles, and leaned upon the barrier wall  
Guarding the curve of the Ponale Road.  
And there I watched the ochre and saffron sails  
Skimming toward Torbole, saw the olive boughs  
On Mount Brione waver in the wind,  
And purple shadows lengthen on the lake.  
Rousing from revery, I was aware of one  
Who stood beside me, swarthy, heavy-browed,  
Threat looming from the caverns of his eyes,  
Black Andrea of Molina, he who wed  
Anita.—I have told you how I loved  
And lost Anita, ere we pledged our vows

Jointly to heaven. I have heard it said  
He was her death.

A cunning, crooked smile  
Twisted his cruel lips; his hairy hands  
Twitched like an ape's. "Now, by God's  
wounds," he cried,  
"You whose sleek face she never ceased to love  
Shall go to meet her!" And with that we  
clutched,  
And strained against the wall and turned and  
writhed,  
Until he slipped and toppled and whirled down—  
Down—down—his body bounding like a ball  
From jutting crag to crag; then there were  
bubbles,  
And ripples—ripples—widening on the lake.

Friend of my youth, offer for me a prayer  
Each day at matin-hour, and when the eve  
Deepens the dusk about Il Santo's shrines,  
And the tall tapers on the altars burn,  
And with the incense holier grows the air,  
Renew your supplication, lest my soul  
Be plunged in the red pit!

## MEMORIES OF COMO

Triumphant Autumn sweeps from shore to shore,  
And works swift magic with her wand of fire;  
She fills the hollows of the hills once more  
With amethyst, and like a golden lyre  
The lyric woodlands murmur and suspire.

I listen, and the clear harmonic sound  
Quickens the radiant past within my brain;  
My spirit crosses with an ardent bound  
The severing ocean, and I float again  
On Como's tranquil breast that bears no stain.

Now dreamily from vineyard-terraced heights  
Are wafted low and artless vintage airs;  
Blent odors lend their attar-sweet delights,  
And by the lake's marge, on the water-stairs,  
I see the dusk-eyed lovers stand in pairs.

I view Varenna's snowy-white cascade,  
And bright Bellagio nestling 'neath its crown  
Of laurel-woven, ilex-darkened shade;  
I mark o'er Lenno, looking grandly down,  
The pilgrim-haunted church of old renown.

Aye, and the mountains that uplift the soul  
Above the gross and earthly, I behold;  
And all the mighty shapes that mass and roll  
Through evanescent cloudland uncontrolled,  
And sunset skies miraculous with gold.

Dear to the heart are memories like these  
Of beauties seen upon some vanished day,  
That, like the carven figures of a frieze  
In marble wrought, although the years decay,  
From fair perfection do not fade away!

## CYPRESSES

### I

Against the sky how gloomily they stand,  
Those dark and tapering trees that one may  
see

By many a shrine in the Italian land,  
Like mourners over frail mortality!

And when I muse on how their shadows fall,  
I seem to hear the melancholy stave  
Of those that tower by the Aurelian wall  
Forever grieving over Shelley's grave!

### II

Do you know the cypresses,  
Group on group, and row on row,—  
Know the stately, lonely trees  
Down at San Vigilio?

They hold compact with the past,  
All its strange deep ebb and flow,—  
Silent, secret to the last  
Down at San Vigilio.

Question—will they answer?—nay!  
Plead—and will they heed you?—no!  
You may hearken many a day  
Down at San Vigilio.

Leave them, then, and let them stand  
    Cryptic, yea, forever so,  
Guardians over lake and land  
    Down at San Vigilio!

## TREMOSINE

Like an eagle Tremosine poises o'er Lake  
Garda's tide,  
Hangs upon the lofty cliff's edge with its  
campanile tower;  
Wears the morning like a rose-leaf, evening  
like a poppy flower;  
Shows a glowing star at midnight to the boat-  
men for a guide.  
Up your dizzy path I clamber for another  
golden hour,  
Tremosine, Tremosine, you the mountain's nest-  
ling bride!

Up your dizzy path I clamber, but I clamber it  
in dreams,  
For the leaves of autumn deepen, and the  
prescient north-wind blows,  
And along the gusty skyline there's a cloudy  
threat of snows;  
While I hear the rush and roaring and the gush  
of pouring streams,  
Tremosine, Tremosine, I can see how you re-  
pose,  
Let me, then, again be with you just for one  
more golden hour,

With the evening drooping o'er you like a  
crimson poppy flower,  
And the great blue lake before you and below  
you wrapt in dreams!

## AT PAESTUM

Across the sea from Sybaris they came,  
Oaring their galleys with long sweep and slow,  
The adventurous Greeks who gave the place a  
name  
More than two thousand shadowy years ago.

Here, sensing beauty in the insensate stone,  
They wrought from out it, span on perfect  
span,  
Pillar and plinth, till, as the flower full blown,  
Rose temples to the gods Olympian.

Despoiled their altars, ravaged are their  
shrines;  
The lizard and the snake alone glide by;  
Yet the tall columns face the Apennines,  
And still the old Greek grandeur typify.

In their Ionic majesty one finds  
The truest tokens that the past can show,—  
What aspirations kindled mortal minds  
More than two thousand shadowy years ago!

## AT TWILIGHT-TIDE UPON COMO'S BREAST

At twilight-tide upon Como's breast,  
A shape like a wondrous butterfly,  
With wings wide spread, on the under-sky  
Of the lake seemed to poise and rest.

And the marvel grew as I saw it lie  
On the placid breast of the lake afloat;—  
Was it really the dream of a boat,  
Or the dream of a butterfly?

## THE HOUSE OF DANTE

This is the house where Dante dwelt  
In the old days at Padua,  
And saw the golden morning melt  
To noon, and eve grow crimson—ah,  
How sad that time in Padua!

In the gray courtyard blooms the rose  
Through the warm changes of the sun;  
In all Italia's garden-close  
No flower was fair to him save one,—  
She whom he longed to look upon.

Below his window is the tomb  
Of Antenor, of ancient race;  
And you may picture in the gloom  
The weary exile's sombre face  
Brooding above that burial-place.

And you may picture how he trod  
The long and dim arcades below,  
In cheerless meditation shod,  
The while the press went to and fro  
To pray in San Antonio.

This is the house where Dante dwelt  
In the old days at Padua,  
And saw the golden morning melt  
To noon, and eve grow crimson,—ah,  
Sad hours, sad hours at Padua!

## A SEA-GULL ON LAKE GARDA

Over Garda a gray gull flying  
With glint of wing in the gold of dawn;  
Over Garda a gray gull crying  
Eerily as the eve drew on!

Far from shores where the great waves welter  
When storm rides up to the trump of doom,  
Why has it sought this lonely shelter  
Where the beetling crests of the mountains  
loom?

Here there is beauty above and under,  
Sapphire water and sapphire sky,  
Yet not the sea with its ancient wonder  
Where all the winds of the world go by.

But haply 'tis only the rover longing,  
The wander-lust that has brought it here,  
The vagrant lure that goes thrilling, thronging,  
Through my own heart at the sweet of the  
year;

To be freed from paths that are broad and  
beaten,  
(Idro, Garda,—wherever you will!)  
Where wilding attars the clear airs sweeten,  
And gipsy music comes over the hill!

All of this from a gray gull flying  
Over Garda at glint of dawn;  
All of this from a gray gull crying  
Over Garda as eve drew on!

## LET THERE BE DREAMS TO-DAY

*“Let there be dreams!”* one said. I answered,  
“yea,

Let there be dreams to-day,  
Fair dreams that come and go  
As silently as snow,  
And one—this one—shall stay  
Within my hearts for aye and aye!”

This one dear dream!—O bugler, call the dawn!  
O trumpeter, sound summons to the night!

These twain are blended for my soul’s delight,  
And never shall be gone!

These twain o’er Garda with the sun and moon.

I have known many a boon,  
But no such guerdon as this dream confers.  
You who are beauty’s faithful worshippers,  
Listen, for rapture stirs

Within me at the conjuring of this dream!

Sun-gleam, moon-beam

On Garda that is loveliness supreme!

Gaze upon Garda’s bosom! Gaze with awe!

For surely mortal vision never saw

So sapphirine a pool of under-sky!

Mark you where Garda’s mountains lift on high,

And the bold eagles fly

I’ the sun’s fiery eye,

Here, if it be on earth, is majesty!

So let me dream my dream of dreams, and slake  
My sense of beauty's thirst, most perfect lake!  
And let the moon and sun  
In wondrous antiphon  
Repeat and yet repeat  
Their tale, and make this miracle complete!  
In this, my vista-dream, shall Riva still  
Sit by its crescent harbor. From its hill  
Shall Malcesine's ancient castle throw  
Its bastioned shadow on the lake below,  
And isolated San Vigilio  
From the deep cincture of its cypress bower  
Face evermore the radiant sunset hour,  
Looking where Salo, amid verdant vines,  
In its blue haven like a jewel shines.  
Still shall Gordone, among spreading palms,  
Take the eternal airs of spring for alms,  
And Sirmione pine, with backward gaze,  
For the renascence of old Roman days,  
And sweet Catullus of the liquid phrase!

Even the veriest hind  
May catch some marvel from the crooning wind  
Haunting the heath and hearth at evenfall,  
When twilight shapes its etchings on the wall.  
Who was not born a dreamer in some wise,  
Let him be pitied! Dull and dark his way.  
But he who sees with wide or lidded eyes,  
Waking or sleeping, some ethereal ray,

A happiness is his none may gainsay;  
And so for me, in their all-golden guise,  
Let there be dreams to-day!

## IMPRESSIONS

### I

In Riva-town the morning came  
Like a great saffron rose of flame;  
Each peak was as a pharos-fire;  
The valleys murmured like a lyre.

The inverted chalice of the sky  
Burned brilliant lapis-lazuli,  
And under the resplendent day  
The lake, a liquid sapphire, lay.

### II

In Riva-town the noon was white  
As lilies blanching in the light,  
Save where the shade lay long and cool  
Like slumberous water in a pool.

The air was heavy with the scent  
Of rose and jasmine attar blent,  
While the shy, swift chameleon  
Ran through all colors in the sun.

### III

In Riva-town the evening fell  
To soft cæsuras of a bell,  
While up the heaven's blue lagoon  
Sailed that gold galleon, the moon.

The shallop stars swam in its wake,  
Reduplicated in the lake,  
Till naught but dreams went up and down  
About the streets of Riva-town.

## THE BASTION

From the slopes a beetling bastion beckoned  
Reared by sturdy hands when Venice's name  
'Mong the powers of earth to none was second,  
Such the zenith glory of her fame.

“Surely,” said I, “I am bid to clamber;  
I must grasp my pilgrim staff and fare!”  
So I chose a morn when azure-amber  
Were the cloudless heights of upper air;  
  
So I left behind the paven highways  
Where calm Riva broods away the hours,  
Winding upward through the narrow byways  
‘Twixt the purple-clustered vineyard-bowers.

Like great stairs the terraces ascended;  
One by one I set my foot to climb;  
From the olive trees, the while I wended,  
The cicada tossed its strident rhyme.

Little greetings cheered me from the grasses;  
Children flung me, as I strode along,  
From above (the dusk-eyed lads and lasses)  
Their sweet alms of soft Italian song.

So at last I scaled the path to wonder,—  
Wonder of a sapphire lake that lay  
Like a flawless jewel resting under  
The wide arch of the expanding day;

Wonder of a plain that swept and billowed  
Like lost edens of dear dreams gone by,  
Of vast mountain summits that seemed pillow'd  
On the bosom of the leaning sky.

As I looked from my exalted station,  
(Now had burst mid-morn in radiant glow)  
On me flooded the full revelation  
Why the bastion beckoned from below.

Here was beauty, here transcendent glory,  
Here was majesty and here was awe,  
Ever changing, yet not transitory,  
Such as Moses on the mountain saw!

## A SAILOR

A silvery wind in the olives,  
And a blue wind on the sea,  
And the cliffs and the coves of Capri  
Call to me.

To the maids in the ripening vineyards  
A hand-wave and a hail;  
Run up on the *Santa Maria*  
A saffron sail!

All the maids of Castellamare,  
Howe'er so fair they be,  
What are they when one maid in Capri  
Calls to me!

## GABRIEL

From one of Titian's canvasses there shines  
The glory of an angel,—Gabriel;  
How strange the contradiction, for they tell  
That he who there is limned with faultless lines  
Had, while he dwelt within the earth's confines,  
A face of heaven, but a heart of hell!

## AT THE VATICAN

(August, 1914)

Where the Italian skies  
Arch with their azure span,  
Silent of lip he lies  
There in the Vatican.  
What of his high estate ?  
That does not make him great !  
Prelates and popes and kings,  
They are but petty things  
Unless in the mortal urn  
The fires immortal burn ;  
Sympathy, charity, faith,  
The simpler, larger trust ;  
Love that mounts like a wraith  
Over the grosser dust !  
Place and pomp and power,  
They are of little worth ;  
Creeds abide for an hour ;  
Deeds, they sweeten the earth !  
Not for the robes he wore,  
Not for his churchly ties,  
But that his fair life bore  
All that is good in man,  
Do we honor him who lies  
There in the Vatican !

## A SAINT

Here is the cloister-cell wherein he bruised  
His shrunken body that his eyes might see ;  
Here is the cloister-walk wherein he mused  
On immortality.

And here the cloister-garden where for hours  
He toiled, intent upon his soul's repose,  
Where still his sweet and saintly spirit flowers  
In one perennial rose.

## SO WE CAME TO MALCESINE

So we came to Malcesine, and our slim barque  
furled its sail  
Underneath the castle ramparts, and we heard  
a nightingale,  
Hidden in an ilex coppice, lift the burden of its  
tale.

And the mountains seemed to listen, looming  
height on looming height,  
And our yearning hearts responded to the cry of  
love's delight,  
As we came to Malcesine at the drooping of the  
night.

## PRIMAVERA

*Primavera! primavera!*

Thus the golden thrushes call  
In cool sallies down the valleys

Where the Umbrian fountains fall.  
Ah, the rapture that they capture,—  
Wanderers by slope and shore!

*Primavera! primavera!*

Spring is in the south once more.

*Primavera! primavera!*

Roses by the Roman wall  
Yield the guerdon of the burden  
Of an attar magical.  
Life's deep measure brimmed with pleasure  
Offers nothing to deplore;  
*Primavera! primavera!*

Spring is in the south once more.

*Primavera! primavera!*

'Tis the heart refrain of all,  
Lord or lowly, base or holy,  
Where Calabrian peaks are tall.  
Lads and lasses down the passes  
Lilt love's olden lyric lore;  
*Primavera! primavera!*

Spring is in the south once more.

## THE DANCING FAUN

They took him from the shrouding earth  
Anigh a Roman villa old;  
What sylvan silence gave him birth  
No wreathèd sibyl ever told.  
Yet he was surely forest born,  
And roamed the woodland wild and wide,  
Dancing to nimble pipes at morn  
And in the hush of eventide.

How fair he was these snowy lines  
In their unmarred perfection show,  
Flitting athwart the dusk of pines  
Those far forgotten years ago.  
Mayhap an envious god in wrath,  
Seeing him foot the alleys dim,  
Beguiled him down some tangled path,  
And put this marble spell on him.

Perchance (who knows?) he there was found  
Within the bosom of the glade,  
With requiem songbirds singing round,  
And sighing reeds that sadly swayed;  
Perchance in wonderment they bore  
To Rome his icy image down,  
And placed him in a square before  
The marvelling imperial town.

And since no sculptor dared to say  
His art had shaped a form so fine,  
An auction strange was held one day  
Beneath the stately Palatine.  
Then he whose wont had been to rove  
At will the winy woodland air  
Was set within a well-trimmed grove  
To make a villa garden fair.

This lonely lot he long endured  
Till Rome was ravaged of her crown,  
And Vandal hands, by beauty lured,  
In mad exultance dragged him down.  
Then it was his, alas, to know  
Of under-earth the blinding pain,  
Till fate, that aimed a toiler's blow,  
Bestowed the golden sky again!

Sole remnant he of all the race  
That once held endless holiday  
In bosky and in bowery place  
When airs were fragrant with the May.  
Ah, who can say what visions still  
Of bondless hours his chill veins warm !  
Fair dusk and dawn dreams yet may thrill  
The seeming coldness of his form.

We ask in vain. As mute he stands  
As when the curse was on him laid,  
And 'neath the god's remorseless hands  
His gladness ceased within the glade.  
Was his a crime that seems so pure?  
"Nay! nay!" his lip, though silent, saith;  
Then why, forsooth, must he endure  
Forevermore this marble death?

## A LOVER OF LUCREZIA

I mind me how that she would come,  
When all the hyacinth dusk was dumb,  
Down sunken cypress-mazes ; then

The sudden nightingales would sing  
Their loves again and yet again

With their perfervid passioning,

With their ecstatic burden,—ah,

Lucrezia ! Lucrezia !

I mind me how the kiss of her  
Was sweet, then bitter as is myrrh ;  
How all her Hybla words were fraught

With subtleties, and how delight

Died ere the dream divine was caught,

Died, and was whelmed and drowned in night,

Drowned in death's black abysses,—ah,

Lucrezia ! Lucrezia !

I mind me how her gleaming eyes  
Gloated above mine agonies ;  
And how her slow, suave smile became

A serpent look intolerable ;

And though I burn in endless flame,

I shall await her down in hell

With itching hands to clutch her,—ah,

Lucrezia ! Lucrezia !

## BENVENUTO

I once knew Benvenuto. He and I  
Both wrought in bronze. He was a seemly  
fellow,  
Skillful as Angelo, deft as Donatello,  
Yet scorning fame, and letting time slip by  
In dreams, as Arno doth when eve is nigh ;  
Often a poet, and then—Punchinello.  
Over a flask of Lacrima Christi, mellow ;  
Laughterful, loveable, open as the sky.

One night when we were wandering in the  
Ghetto,  
We met a ruffian whom they called *Il Bruto*  
Who beat a cringing stripling of a boy.  
I saw my friend was fingering his stiletto,  
Then, in a flash, he thrust the shining toy  
'Twixt the man's ribs. There you have  
Benvenuto !

## POPPEA

Then spake Poppea wantonly, and said,  
She that was doomed and dead  
Dim centuries since, "bring thou to me"  
(This was in dreams)  
"Some subtle lectuary  
Meet for abandonment!"  
And I uprose and went,  
Being a slave within that pillared place  
Where golden streams  
In basins wrought of traced chalcedony  
Bubbled and sparkled with alluring grace.  
I came to one  
Who as a statue seemed, wrought out of night,  
Awful to look upon.  
He handed me a chalice of the dye  
Of lapis-lazuli.  
"Take it," he cried, "herein is all delight!"  
I took and bore it, and Poppea quaffed,  
The while she laughed.  
"This is love's dearest philter," then quoth she  
Triumphantly,  
As, with swift-ebbing breath,  
She reached out arms to Death.

## A ROMAN TWILIGHT

The purple tints of twilight over Rome;  
Against the sunset great Saint Peter's dome,  
And through the gateways peasants wending  
home.

Shadows that gather round the Aventine;  
And just above the dim horizon line  
The star of Hesper, like a light divine.

A perfume faint as of forgotten sweets,  
As though there came, far-borne through lonely  
streets,  
The breath of violets from the grave of Keats!

## A CRIPPLE

You note yon cripple by the Duomo door,  
With his bent body, like an olive bough  
Warped by the winter wind ?

He has a soul  
Straight as a cypress sapling on a hill  
Limned in an arrowy line against the morn !

## A MUNTEBANK

Mark you that mountebank who hugs his fiddle  
As though the instrument were an Amati?  
He hails from the bleak heights above Frascati,  
And is, they tell me, something of a riddle.

Were a dumb thing abused, he'd act the hero,  
Incensed, with hand and foot the offender  
spurning;  
But if it chanced, we'll say, that Rome were  
burning,  
He'd sit and play his fiddle as did Nero.

## ENIGMA

'Twas a chance meeting in a gallery;  
He seemed all charm and blithe urbanity.  
He spoke of Titian and of Angelo,  
Of Guido and of Fra Angelico,  
Of Botticelli, and his features shone  
With such a look as young Endymion,  
Straying the meads of Latmos, might have had.  
But when I mentioned Borgia, the blood-mad  
Insatiate Ezzelino, and the grim  
And cruel Malatesta, over him  
A change as swift as sudden lightning came,  
And then was gone. I never knew his name.  
He seemed all charm and blithe urbanity,  
And yet I often wonder—

## CHIMES AT PADUA

Dim falls the violet twilight hour,  
The evening air grows cool, and, ah,  
How sweet from San Andrea's tower  
The chimes float over Padua !

The dusk descends, the white stars flower  
Above the red-tiled roofs, and, ah,  
How fair from San Andrea's tower  
The chimes drift over Padua !

And while night lessens hour by hour  
Till blooms the golden morning, ah,  
How soft from San Andrea's tower  
The chimes waft over Padua !

LIONETTO



## LIONETTO

(*A Hospital in Venice, A. D. 1400. LIONETTO and a PRIEST. LIONETTO speaks.*)

I am called Lionetto, and I dwell  
Upon a narrow street that blindly ends  
Behind San Giacometto. Speak my name  
On the Rialto, in the stately square  
Through which all Venice passes in to pray  
Beneath the portals where the bronze steeds  
stand,  
And you will learn of me. My gondola  
Was once the fleetest on the water-ways;  
My hand was deftest with the long lithe oar.  
But that is past.

“Haste!” said you?

With mine eyes

I seemed to read that word upon your lips,  
That word and others, so that now I know  
My little lamp of life will soon die out,  
And darkness close about me. Note you not  
How speech eludes my hearing? Mine own  
voice  
Sounds faint, like far off murmur of the waves  
At night upon the Lido. Nearer!—stoop!  
I would not have you miss one syllable,  
Lest missing one, your absolution fail!

How happily together she and I  
Lived with our winsome boy, a roguish lad  
Whose added summers not yet numbered four !  
That was before her cruel father came,  
He who at Pavia had tarried long  
As the Visconti's servile underling.  
In that glad time the days with laggard feet  
Dragged ever by, till I could get me home,  
And feel my fair boy's arms about my neck,  
And with a greeting fond give back her smile.  
Oft in the quiet of the summer eves  
Below the marble of some palace stair,  
While I touched lightly the guitar's sweet  
strings,  
Would she uplift the rapture of her voice,  
And spell the night with passionate melodies.  
And oft have lovely ladies overleaned  
From balconies silk-screened, soft-praising her ;  
And oft have nobles from the wide-thrown doors  
Tossed out a shining disc of orient gold,  
And bid her buy some bauble. That was ere  
Her cruel father came to bide with us.

After the mocking profile of his face  
First cast upon our wall its evil shade,  
She never was the same. Night following night  
I met her wan<sup>g</sup> welcome, but, dull fool,  
Deemed some slight ailment vexed her, till one  
eve,

As slow and silent I passed up the stair,  
I heard her father pour within her ear  
The subtle philter of a lying tale;—  
How I feigned love—was false—spent idle days  
With some light paramour, for then it chanced  
The sun of fortune shone not down on me,  
And I brought little home for hungry mouths.  
Then anger leaped from leash, for when the  
hound,

Sensing my fury, whimpered cringingly  
That he but heard these things low-noised about,  
Did not believe them, was but asking her  
Could she believe them, I cast back the lie  
Into his leering face, and bade him go,  
And darken ne'er again a door of mine.  
So crept he out, not answering me a word.

And she? What said she? Naught. She made  
no sign

While I was speaking, and when I had done  
Only looked at me with her large calm eyes  
In mute reproach that was more hard to bear  
Than all her father's calumnies. The thought  
That ire had made me not quite just to him,  
That haply some malicious knave had sown  
This festering seed within the old man's brain  
Brought sharp regret to harrow me.

“Forgive,  
Forgive me, sweet!” remorsefully I cried;

“I’ll win him back, and crave his pardon here.”  
With that I went, and sought him near and far  
In the low haunts I knew he frequented,  
But found him not.

“He will return,” I said,  
Communing with myself, “the morrow morn.  
Aye, even now he may have come to beg  
My patience with him!”

Thus I, homeward-bent,  
Dreamed blindly of forgiveness mutual.

Meanwhiles the night shut in, a grim, dank  
night,  
And all the myrmidons of darkness drew  
Their folds about the city. Grisly fear  
Darted from ambush, clutching at my heart,  
When I beheld from the accustomed pane  
No loving taper fling its welcoming light.  
Onward I stumbled, as a spent man fares  
At dusk-fall up some riven mountain slope  
Unguided by the beckoning of a star,  
And lo,—chill emptiness! The only voice  
That answer gave to my beseeching cries  
Was mocking echo.

O those pitiless hours,  
Those anguished hours until the midnight  
stormed  
The windless silence from an unseen tower!  
What awful doubts in grim procession stalked

Throughout my mind, slaying each new-born  
hope!

What dismal fancies rose and grew and grasped  
My strained imagination, till my brain  
Reeled to the verge of madness!

Would she come?—

I prayed. I cried in frenzy unto God,  
Upbraided him. I cursed. Then midnight  
struck.

My sleep was phantom-peopled. Down dim  
aisles,

Endless, and set with somber cypress shades,  
I wandered amid sad and sheeted forms,  
Forever seeking one I failed to find.

I wakened suddenly. A sullen morn  
Peered through the casement, and I heard a  
voice,

His voice, her father's voice. Upright I sprang,  
A thrill with joy, but when I saw his face  
I felt joy sicken to a pale despair,  
Then die, and quickly nascent in its stead  
Reared those dire twins, black rage and red  
revenge.

Yet had I curbed these furies had his tongue  
Not spat forth venom. How the demon laughed,  
Flung his foul boastings in my very face  
That he had lured her from me. To what end  
This most unnatural deed had been wrought out

He gave not forth, nor yet divulged he why  
Toward me he harbored hatred. Did he deem  
Me dull and dotard that he tarried thus  
And trifled with my heart-strings?

He had learned  
All craft, all crime, all hideous wickedness  
From the Visconti while at Pavia;  
Yet when I gave that furious tiger-spring,  
My hot hands itching for his flabby throat,  
Of what availed his wiles?

I strangled him,  
And cast him from me as one would a rat.  
And then— What said you? Trial? Murder? nay!  
Venice has deep lagoons that tell no tales,  
And who was there to miss him?

She?  
Just God,  
Was this thine ever-sure, stern meting-out  
Of punishment, that where the long sea-wall  
Across the tides looks in the eyes of dawn,  
The cruel water should give up its dead?  
They found her there, and in her arms our boy,  
Our fair-haired boy.

How very cold it grows!  
The doctors say this woeful hurt of mine  
Is slow in healing. Night has come so soon.—  
Dear Christ, have pity on my soul!

(The PRIEST)

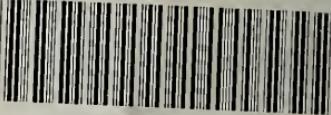
*Amen!*







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